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The Wider Family Learning Nexus: “It’s still all to play for!”

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Interest and Commitment



The organisations represented in this study, namely a third sector education provider, and a regional HEI, both claim they have '*civic responsibilities*' and '*vision*'.

The vision of the SAFC Foundation of Light is to inspire those taking part to achieve their goals, and to drive up the aspirations of the local community.

The university promotes '*... social and cultural collaboration throughout the North East of England*' This is underpinned by a belief that it has a fundamentally strong activity of teaching and research that can support and strengthen its civic partnerships, "*...through achievements and continuing commitment*" (Northumbria University, 2009, p. 7).

Civic responsibilities – a complimentary vision



The sharing of the civic vision and cultural responsiveness of Northumbria as a regional University, is complementary to that of SAFC Foundation of Light (Northumbria University Corporate Strategy 2009-2014 and the SAFC Foundation Aims).

This shared vision reflects the interlocking of ideas and '*...an agentive and collaborative approach*'. The sharing of responsibilities and vision when 'lived out' allows for a relationship of '*... teaching and learning to the wider world; the back-and-forth dialogue between researchers*' and participants in roles that take a wide and sensitive view of community, learning, family and citizens (Bruner, 1996, p 96; ACU, 2001:i).

By sharing a vision from the premise of theory and practice, we were able to evaluate existing policies and practices, which helped to inform the social impact evaluation study.

Theoretical underpinning



WFL as a structural mechanism provides both *process* and *content*, which can be used to share understanding of regional, educational, intergenerational capacity, and learning (Goss, McKenna and Gallagher, 2012).

Family learning in particular gives emphasis to a wider contribution to civilised society, where people can play a full part in *their* community and *their* neighbourhood which strengthens *their* family and consequently the nation (DfEE 1988: forward).

Family Learning agencies that adopt a regionally responsiveness enable '*...local needs to be met*' (McKenna, 2004, Dench, Hillage and Coare, 2006). The development of learning capability (Claxton, 2007) inside and outside of the WFL programmes and the HEI can be viewed as pivotal to regional capacity building. Providing it is shared ...

The Research-Teaching Nexus (Healey and Jenkins (2009))



Staff as Participants

Research tutored

Emphasis is learning focussed on research presentations, writing and discussion papers.

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Research base

Developing capability of self and others in undertaking and sharing roles in the enquiry.

Research led

Structuring of research content feeds directly into teaching and learning

Research orientated

Emphasises processes of knowledge and construction in the subject gained from location and roles.

Staff as Audience Participants as Audience

Research Content

Research Process



Research led and research orientated



- Awareness and experienced in taking on research tenders
- Reasonably grounded in relation to research into parenting courses.
- Confident about interpersonal skills. and confident about use of a range of data collection tools .
- Some issues with focus and format.
- Confident PI who knew the field.
- Confident in use of the demographics and deprivation indices.
- Competent in sourcing and in the analysis of literature.
- Happy to share ideas, listen to others and use established skills and build upon these as lecturer and active researcher
- Helped me to look beyond the obvious, get a better understanding of how community works.
- It an interface of process to the practice and theory of applied research.
- Already orientated in subject matter, further informed and expanded my awareness.
- The team's combined experience and expertise led to the achievement of positive experiences for participants, researchers and co-researchers.
- Fixing ways to gather the data around the formal tools of questions, contextual talk, informal talk and illustrations.

Research tutored and research base



- **Courage of own convictions stemming from old knowledge, and new research base.**
- **It enabled me to illustrate competence through natural examples...**
- **Enhanced opportunities to share learning with other students and staff. Added a new dimension to the team**
- **(R&T activities) activity specifically own interest of informed consent.**
- **It is important to remember that today's students maybe my peers, stakeholders or co researchers tomorrow.**
- **Credibility of team recognised and acknowledge in the Faculty and by the Foundation of Light**
- **Learning through the research with peers co-constructing understanding.**
- **Helped me to make connections and think "outside of the box".**
- **Understand how different community's members viewed the same phenomenon and practices differently.**
- **Cycle of personal praxis aided by interactions with parents as participants it was also aided in illustrations of situational analysis and development of meaning with this community.**

What have we learned and what questions remain?



WFL research and the R-T nexus

- Reduce social polarisation
 - Influence and recognise the importance of learning
 - Build public confidence in big institutions, parents and research teams
 - Alter the views of learners, and learning inside and outside
 - We are not rivals in, or of, understanding
 - We share intellectual property
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- What are the views of the WFL coaches?
 - What are the views of the Head teachers?
 - What are the views of the class specific teachers?
 - Gaps in knowledge

“It’s still all to play for!”